

In the Specification:

Please amend the title as follows:

STRIKER AND STRIKER SYSTEM

On page 1, the first full paragraph has been amended as follows:

The present invention relates to a striker and striker system, namely, the present invention relates to a striker and striker system for locking two members with each other by engagement of the striker with a hook, wherein the striker and the hook are fixed to the two members, respectively. The striker devised according to the present invention is used for locking, for instance, a car door to a car body.

The last full paragraph bridging pages 1 and 2 has been amended as follows:

The striker shown in Figure 6A includes a mounting plate portion 121 which is fixed to a car body and a base plate portion 122 which is formed (bent) upright relative to the mounting plate portion 121 by a bending process. A ~~rod-like~~ rod portion 123 is formed at one end (the right end as viewed in Figure 6A) of the base plate portion ~~122~~ 129 by making a through-hole 122 in the base plate portion 122 so that the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion 123 is used as an engaging portion engageable with a groove of an associated hook.

On page 2, the first full paragraph has been amended as follows:

The striker shown in Figure 6B includes two base plate portions 222 and 222' which overlies each other and a ~~rod-like~~ rod portion 223 which is formed at one end (the upper end as viewed in Figure 6B) of each of the two base plate portions 222 and 222' by making a through-hole 229 in the two base plate portions 222 and 222', so that the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion 223 is used as an engaging portion engageable with a groove of an associated hook. The two base plate portions 222 and 222' are formed upright relative to two mounting plate portions 221 and 221' of the striker, respectively,

by a bending process. In addition, the two base plate portions 222 and 222' are not separate plate members; the two base plate portions 222 and 222' are formed by bending a seamless plate along a portion thereof which is formed as the aforementioned ~~rod-like~~ rod portion 223.

On page 3, the first full paragraph has been amended as follows:

To engage and disengage the striker with/from the groove of the associated hook smoothly, it is desirable that the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion be rounded off and have a large thickness (e.g., 3 to 7 millimeters, desirably 4 to 6 millimeters depending on factors such as the inner diameter of the groove of the associated hook). Namely, it is desirable that the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion have a round shape such as a circular shape in cross section (section taken along a plane orthogonal to the direction of the length of the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion) and that the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion have a large thickness (diameter).

The last paragraph bridging pages 3 and 4 has been amended as follows:

In the striker shown in Figure 6A, the base plate portion 122 only has a thickness of a single plate, and accordingly, the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion 123 only has a thickness of a single plate. Therefore, it is impossible for the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion 123 to be formed so as to have the aforementioned large thickness and to have a circular shape in cross section. Note that an increase in thickness of the base plate portion 122 causes other problems such as an increase in weight and an increase in production cost, and therefore cannot be adopted.

On page 4, the first full paragraph has been amended as follows:

In the striker shown in Figure 6B, the two base plate portions 222 and 222' are made by overlaying two plate portions on each other, and accordingly, the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion 223 can be formed to have the aforementioned large thickness and a round shape such as a circular shape in cross section. However, since the two base plate portions 222 and 222' have the two mounting plate portions 221 and 221', respectively, there are problems with the striker being heavy and having a production cost. Additionally, since the direction of bending the mounting plate portion 221 and the base plate portion 222, the direction of bending the two base plate portions 222 and 222', and the

direction of bending the base plate portion 222' and the mounting plate portion 221' are mutually different, it is quite difficult to carry out these three bending operations successively.

The last full paragraph bridging pages 5 and 6 has been amended as follows:

According to an aspect of the present invention, a striker is provided for locking two members with each other by engagement of the striker with a groove of a hook, wherein the striker is fixed to one of the two members and the hook is rotatably fixed to the other of the two members, the striker including a mounting plate portion fixed to the one of the two members; a base plate portion which is formed so as to extend perpendicular to the mounting plate portion by a bending process along a bend line; and a folded-back plate portion which is formed by folding over an extended portion, extending from one end of the base plate portion in a direction of the bend line, onto the opposite side of the base plate portion from the mounting plate portion side, so that the extended portion overlies the base plate portion. The base plate portion is positioned closer to the hook than the folded-back plate portion. A through-hole is formed in the base plate portion and the folded-back plate portion, which overlie each other, so that a folded end portion between the base plate portion and the folded-back plate portion defines a ~~rod-like~~ rod portion serving as an engaging portion engageable with a groove of the hook.

The last full paragraph bridging pages 6 and 7 has been amended as follows:

Furthermore, according to another aspect of the present invention, a striker is provided for locking two members with each other by engagement of the striker with a groove of a hook, wherein the striker is fixed to one of the two members and the hook is rotatably fixed to the other of the two members, the striker including a mounting plate portion fixed to the one of the two members; a base plate portion which is formed so as to extend perpendicular to the mounting plate portion by a bending process along a bend line; and a ~~rod-like~~ rod portion which is formed by folding over an extended portion, extending from one end of the base plate portion in a direction of the bend line, onto the opposite side of the base plate portion from the mounting plate portion side, so that the folded over the extended portion defines a folded-back plate portion. The base plate portion is positioned closer to the hook than the folded-back plate portion. A through-hole is formed in the

base plate portion so as to define the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion, the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion serving as an engaging portion engageable with a groove of the hook.

On page 7, first full paragraph has been amended as follows:

It is desirable that a first portion of a cross section of the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion at the folded end portion which is taken along a plane orthogonal to the direction of the length of the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion be greater in length than a second portion of the same cross section of the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion, wherein the first portion and the second portion are located on the base-plate-portion side and the folded-back-plate-portion side, respectively.

The last paragraph bridging pages 7 and 8 and 9 has been amended as follows:

According to the present invention, by the adoption of a metal plate having a normal thickness (normal thickness for the production of strikers, e.g., 3 millimeters) as an unprocessed plate material, a low-cost striker which has the aforementioned thickness and a round shape such as a circular shape in cross section can be achieved via a simple manufacturing operation with no substantial increase in weight of the striker. Moreover, by positioning the center of rotation of the hook on the mounting plate portion side, a base-plate portion of the striker, the distance of which from the center of rotation of the hook being short, can be made so as to come in contact with a leg portion of the hook (one of the leg portions which is pressed by the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion upon disengagement of the hook from the striker). Namely, the force exerted on the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion from the hook can be received by the base-plate portion of the striker, the distance of which from the center of rotation of the hook is short, and accordingly, the force exerted on the striker from the hook in the case where the force is exerted on the striker via the base-plate portion can be made smaller than in the case where the force is exerted on the striker via a folded-back plate portion of the striker. Therefore, the folded-back plate portion of the striker can be prevented from coming off the base plate portion. Furthermore, a reaction force (i.e., the force continuously exerted on a ratchet which locks the hook) when the engagement of the hook with the ratchet is disengaged by an operation of a door handle, or the like, can be reduced.

On page 9, the first full paragraph has been amended as follows:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of an embodiment of a striker system comprising a striker and a hook engageable with the striker, showing a positional relationship therebetween;

On page 10, the second full paragraph has been amended as follows:

Figure 5 is a perspective view of another embodiment of the striker system including the striker and the hook engageable with the striker, showing a positional relationship therebetween;

On page 10, the fifth full paragraph has been amended as follows:

An embodiment of a striker according to the present invention will be hereinafter discussed with reference to Figures 1 through 4D. These drawings are schematic views illustrating the relative location between a hook 5 and a striker 2, and the force exerted on the striker 2 and a ~~rod-like~~ rod portion 23 thereof, so that the shapes of the hook 5 and the striker 2 shown in the drawings are different from the actual shapes thereof to some degree. Firstly, the relationship between the striker 2 and the hook 5 will be discussed hereinafter.

On page 12, the first full paragraph has been amended as follows:

As shown in the drawings, the striker 2 is provided with a mounting plate portion 21, a base plate portion 22, a ~~rod-like~~ rod portion 23, a folded-back plate portion 24, and a through-hole 29.

On page 13, the first full paragraph has been amended as follows:

The through-hole 29 is formed (punched) by a hole-press operation with the base plate portion 22 and the folded-back plate portion 24 overlaid on each other so that the folded end portion (the right end portion as viewed in Figure 4C) between the base plate portion 22 and the folded-back plate portion 24 remains as the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion 23. The ~~rod-like~~ rod portion 23 is used as an engaging portion engageable with the hook 5.

The last paragraph bridging pages 13 and 14 have been amended as follows:

The ~~rod-like~~ portion 23 is formed so that a cross sectional shape thereof is substantially circular as shown in Figures 3A and 3B, and so that a base-plate portion 23a of the ~~rod-like~~ portion

23, which was continuous with the base plate portion 22 (i.e., shared the same surface) before the formation of the through-hole 29, becomes radially longer in cross section than a folded-back plate portion 23b of the ~~rod-like~~ portion 23, which was continuous with the folded-back plate portion 24 before formation of the through-hole 29.

On page 13, the first full paragraph has been amended as follows:

Accordingly, in a state where the ~~rod-like~~ portion 23 has moved to the hook 5 in the direction of the arrow A to be engaged therewith, the base-plate portion 23a is in contact with the front leg portion 52 of the hook 5 while undergoing a force from the hook 5. In other words, the base-plate portion 23a exerts a force on the hook 5.

The last full paragraph bridging pages 14 and 15 has been amended as follows:

Accordingly, the striker 2 can secure a sufficient strength without being formed with a mounting plate portion such as the mounting plate portion 221' shown in Figure 6B. Moreover, the folded-back plate portion 24 can be prevented from coming off the base plate portion 22 even if the folded-back plate portion 24 is not fixed to the base plate portion 22 by welding or adhering. Accordingly, the folded-back plate portion 24 can be provided only for the purpose of achieving the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion 24 having a circular shape in cross section with a required thickness while securing a sufficient thickness of the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion 23. For instance, another embodiment of a striker 12 shown in Figure 5 is different from the striker 2 in that the striker 12 is provided with only the ~~rod-like~~ rod portion 23 and no folded-back plate portion corresponding to the folded-back plate portion 24 that lies on the base plate portion 22, even though the striker 12 is the same as the striker 2 in that an extended portion, which extends from one end of the base plate portion 22 in the direction of the aforementioned bend line, is folded over. To make a through-hole 119 in the striker 12, the base plate portion 22 only needs to be formed (punched) by a hole-press operation, which facilitates manufacture of the striker 12.